constituencies will also be taken up by the Commission; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the time by which this Commission is likely to start its work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTRY OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) to (c). Under the provisions of the Constitution, no delimitation can be undertaken until the relevant figures for the first census taken after the year 2000 have been published. The Constitution (Seventy–first Amendment) Bill, 1990, was introduced in the Rajya Sabha to provide for fresh delimitation of constituencies on the basis of the 1981 census figures without affecting the total number of seats allocated to various States. Further action can be taken only after the Constitution (Amendment) Bill is passed by the Parliament.

Strengthening of Handloom Sector

851. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to strengthen the handloom sector;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard;

(c) whether there is any proposal to offer tenements sheds and some softloans to traditional weavers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) Yes, Sir. Government of India have launched a number of new Schemes in addition to the existing handloom schemes from the current financial year with the objective of strengthening the handloom sector.

(b) With a view to achieving an all round development of the handloom industry, Government of India have drawn up the following developmental schemes during the current financial year:–

a. Project Package Scheme for Handloom Weavers.

b. Integrated Handloom Villages Development.

c. Scheme for Margin Money for Destitute Weavers.

d. Modified Workshed–cum–Housing Scheme for Handloom Weavers.

e. Modified Thrift Fund Scheme for Handloom Weavers.

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir. Government of India has been operating a Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Workshed–cum–Housing Scheme" in which Central Subsidy is provided for construction of Workshed–cum–Houses. As per the revised scheme implemented from the current year, the unit cost has been revised upward, and provision for electrification and land cost has also been included in the unit cost.

Demands of Ex–Servicemen

852. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have considered afresh long pending various demands of the ex–servicemen; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the decision taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) and (b). It has been Government's constant endeavour to better the lot of ex-Servicemen. Accordingly, various demands of ex-Servicemen have been met from time to time. A High Level Empowered Committee was set up by the Government in September 1991 to review the existing pension structure and other retirement benefits of Defence Services pensioners of different ranks. The recommendations of the Committee have been accepted by the Government and necessary orders are under issue.

A statement on the facilities granted to ex-Servicemen is attached.

STATEMENT

Package of Facilities/Concessions to Armed Forces Pensioners

There is a comprehensive package of facilities/concessions/welfare measures to which Armed Forces Pensioners are entitled. The important facilities/concessions are indicated below:-

(a) Eligibility to apply against vacancies reserved for ex-Servicemen under the Central Government Departments/Public Sector Undertakings.

(b) Eligible to avail of any of the training schemes meant for ex-Servicemen to improve their skills.

(c) Eligible to avail of facility for starting self-employment ventures under several schemes, major among them being SEMFEX I, SEMFEX II, SEMFEX III. There are a number of other schemes such as allotment of petroleum product agencies, allotment of Unit Trust of India agency, transportation agencies for coal and petroleum products etc. which can also be taken advantage of by the Pensioners.

(d) Free medical facilities in the Military Hospitals.

(e) Canteen facilities.

(f) In case of need, eligible for financial assistance provided by the KSB, Services Headquarters and other Organisations.

(g) Children of those Pensioners who were disabled in action enjoy educational concessions like complete exemption from tution and other fees, hostel charges, cost of books and other stationery, cost of uniform etc, upto first Degree Course.

(h) Provision of artificial limbs and surgical appliances for disabled/War Injury Pensioners.

(i) Special pension of Rs. 50/- per month in case of blinded Pensioners whose blindness is attributable to military service.

(j) Constant Attendance Allowance in appropriate cases irrespective of the rank to War Injury Pensioners.

(k) In addition, there are a number of other welfare measures undertaken by the State Governments which are available for the benefit of these Pensioners. The position however, differs from State to State.